



PRESS RELEASE

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SECRET SERVICE NATIONAL THREAT ASSESSMENT CENTER RELEASES REPORT ON MASS ATTACKS IN PUBLIC SPACES

Mass Attacks in Public Spaces

(Washington, D.C.) Today, the U.S. Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center (NTAC) released a comprehensive study on mass attacks in public spaces. This study focused on 28 incidents in 2017, in which three or more persons were harmed and were carried out in public places within the United States. The report takes an in-depth look into the commonalities of these attackers which include: location of attack, weapons used, gender, age, substance abuse, criminal history, mental health, motives, targeting, stressors, and communications.

The findings of the report support existing best practices the Secret Service has established in threat assessment and highlight the importance of a comprehensive investigation into an individual's background in order to assess potential risk. "Our behavioral research on incidents of targeted violence has shaped how we conduct threat assessments as an agency," said Assistant Director Frederick Sellers of the Secret Service's Office of Strategic Intelligence and Information. "We use multiple sources to gather and analyze information to assess concerning behaviors and identify mitigation strategies in support of our protective mission."

For over twenty years, the Secret Service NTAC has been conducting research, training, and consultation on the prevention of targeted violence. Through promoting best practices, information sharing and standardization of threat assessment, NTAC has provided nearly 500 in depth training opportunities to over 93,000 attendees at schools, law enforcement departments, and agencies around the country. The Secret Service has been a pioneer in the field of threat assessment by conducting research on the targeting of public officials and public figures and then using this research to create a model for the investigation of threat cases. This model offers a systematic approach to identify individuals who may be exhibiting threatening or concerning behavior and assessing the risk posed by the individual. The continuous academic research based approach to studying indicators of acts of violence supports the Secret Service's protective mission and our nation's effort to better protect our communities from unwanted risks.

The Secret Service will continue to build on our threat assessment methodology and provide our research findings and approach to the public and private sectors to enhance prevention efforts of those charged with safeguarding our nation. Our latest study on *Mass Attacks in Public Spaces* represents another piece in the continuous effort to ensure we are doing everything possible to fulfill our protective mission and provide our partners and neighbors with sound and reliable information.

For more information, go to <https://www.secretservice.gov/press/releases/> where you will find Dr. Lina Alathari's (Chief of the Secret Service NTAC) testimony before the United States Senate Committee on the Judiciary from March 14, 2018.